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Brazil in the Early Eighteenth Century: The Golden Age Of Brazil

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for the hard discipline that is history. This has been done only too often—with dire results; for the soul of a nation, like the soul of a man, can only live by truth and will never grow by self-deceit.”

Such are the speeches collected in this volume. It is a pity that Father Araneta did not write one continuous and homogeneous book, instead of merely a collection of speeches. Hardly anybody reads speeches. Now that he is no longer Rector, he may at last find the time to write. He is eminently qualified to do so. Senator Raul Manglapus, who provides the introduction to this volume, pays him this compliment: “When Father Araneta was a student at the Ateneo de Manila, where I was privileged to be his classmate for eleven years, he was one of the more perfect exponents of *sapientia atque eloquentia*, the avowed ends of that system of education which it is now his life’s work to implement...”

MIGUEL A. BERNAD

BRAZIL IN THE EARLY EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

THE GOLDEN AGE OF BRAZIL: 1695-1750. The Pains of a Colonial Society. By C. R. Boxer. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1962. xiii, 443 pp.

Literature on Brazil is rare in the Philippines. This is not surprising. Unlike the Spanish empire in South America, the biggest of Portugal’s former colonies was merely tangential to the history of the Philippines. Except for the brief span from 1580 to 1640, when the two crowns of Spain and Portugal were united in the person of the Spanish king, hostility rather than amity marked the relations between the Hispanic and the Lusitanian empires from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries. Partly through government support, partly because Spain was involved in the *reconquista*, Portugal was a sail ahead of Spain in her voyages of discovery. One need not go so far as to say that the resulting Eastern trade in spices was a Portuguese monopoly, but the initial advantage enjoyed by Portugal was a factor in the history of modern colonial expansion.

Portugal concentrated her men and her resources in the fabulous East, and it is still mooted whether the discovery of Brazil (its first name: *Terra de Vera Cruz*) by Cabral in 1500 was accidental or not. Three decades of Portuguese unconcern followed, ended only when French traders showed interest in the dyewood (*brasil*) found there in abundance and which gave the land its present name. The original plan of colonization was based on land grants (*capitanias*) authorized

by Dom João III (1521-1557) to twelve proprietors (*donatários*). But four of these never left Portugal, four died shortly after landing in Brazil, and the remaining four proved to be such a headache that the king decided to centralize the colonial government under a royal representative with wide powers of jurisdiction.

The first royal appointee was Thomé de Sousa, who set up a seat of government in *Bahia de Todos os Santos* in 1549. Six Jesuit missionaries accompanied de Sousa to the new world, and with their arrival the colonial history of Brazil begins.

The earliest Portuguese settlements were lined up along the tropical coastal belt favorable to the culture of sugar and tobacco and the trade in dyewood. Unlike their Spanish counterparts, the Portuguese clung to the coast, satisfied, as one chronicler wrote, "with just sliding like crabs along the coastline from one sugar plantation to another." Except for isolated slave raids undertaken by individual *donatários*, the early colonists did not penetrate into the interior (*sertão*). Mining experience was notoriously *not* a Portuguese trait and, while the mines at Potosí already assured a flow of silver to Spain, there were no known deposits of precious metal to attract people to the unexplored hinterland. Sugar, tobacco and brazilwood remained the chief incentive and these were more easily transportable by water.

The union of Spain and Portugal had some noteworthy effects on the development of Brazil. Population increased by the advent of the Portuguese Christians who refused to accept Spanish rule and of the Jews who chose life in the unknown world rather than conform to the religious policy of Spain. At the same time, Brazil became another target for attack by the enemies of Spain. The colony had her share of leaders and heroes, and one of them, João Fernandez Vieira, is honored today as the creator of Brazilian nationalism. With no appreciable help from the home government, he led his fellow-Brazilians in the assault that destroyed the last Dutch stronghold in Brazil in 1654.

As the sub-title indicates, *The Golden Age of Brazil* is a study of the "growing pains of a colonial society." Based mainly on documentary material, it covers the first half of the eighteenth century, from the discovery of gold in what is now Minas Gerais between 1693 and 1695 to the end of the reign of Dom João IV in Portugal (1750); that is to say, the eve of the rise to power of the Marquis of Pombal, whose ministry was to leave a lasting imprint on history.

There are twelve chapters (pp. 1-325), eight statistical appendices (pp. 330-61), a *Personalia* section that serves as a biographical guide (pp. 362-70), and a glossary of Portuguese terms (pp. 371-73). Notes to the text are towards the end of the book (pp. 377-418), an arrange-

ment that may not suit the scholar who wants the ready reference to the sources of the author, but which perhaps will accommodate the general reader who finds footnotes just a little distracting. There are finally a bibliography, maps, illustrations, and an index.

Brazil in the second half of the seventeenth century was popularly described as a "Hell for Blacks, a purgatory for Whites and a paradise for Mulattoes" (p. 1). This might have been an exaggeration, but given the distance from the mother country and the pionering life the Portuguese colonists were subjected to, there was some truth in the saying. For the blacks, it was a hellish life of slavery, best summed up by the statement in a report that there was "no difference between Negroes and goods" (p. 7). It was purgatory only for the cultured courtiers assigned to ministry in the colony, an appointment they looked on as virtual exile. For the other Portuguese who crossed the Atlantic, impoverished expatriates who made up the majority of the colonists, it was a second chance for a new home and a better life. As for the mulattoes, it was paradise in the sense that the traditional Christian moral restraints were loosed somewhat, despite official policy to the contrary, based on "the conviction that mulattoes almost invariably embodied the vices rather than the virtues of the two races whose blood was intermingled in their own" (pp. 17-18). The indigenous Amerindian formed a third racial group, a people of less importance in the second half of the seventeenth century; but in the chronic clashes between the European, the African and the Amerindian, it was these last that came off the worst.

By 1690, Brazil was in the midst of an economic crisis. Not as attractive as the Spice Islands of the East, it was at most an appendage to the Portuguese empire. Small pox in Angola, the source of the Negro slave trade, and yellow fever in Brazil had decimated the slave population, severely affecting the sugar and tobacco industries. Government measures, including an industrialization program and the stimulation of the haphazard search for metals, were passed to avert disaster. None was a success, and the industrialization program collapsed with the suicide of its chief supporter in 1690. Then came a succession of bad sugar harvests, unseasonable rains and the deadly presence of yellow fever, felling men and beasts: Brazilian economy was on the verge of collapse. But just when the Crown was about to give up on the colony, alluvial gold was discovered and the first of several gold rushes began.

With this initial point of reference, Professor Boxer begins his masterly essay on a critical half-century period in the history of Brazil. With a scholar's intuition, he analyzes the conflict of interests occasioned by the discovery of gold and diamonds in what had been, until then, a neglected sector of the Portuguese world. Men of all kinds swarmed in to wrestle with the harsh, niggardly soil of Brazil

and compete with their fellow-men—all of them hopeful, crazed perhaps by the desire for sudden wealth and opulent living.

Simply put, the pattern of events he describes revolved around the question as to who got the gold. At a time when men perforce lived by the law of the jungle, an answer was not easily found. There was the slave, male and female. He was the beast of burden, she was the paid entertainer. Did they receive their just reward? There was the white prospector. He had sold all and gambled his entire future life on an uncertain venture. Did he always find what he sought? There was the foreign interloper. He was unwelcome; but he came and he had the means to circumvent the law to his advantage. There was the colonial officer. At first uncertain about the Crown policy (invariably late to profit from the situation), he was in the end hard put to it to enforce law and order or to protect the royal rights (*quinto*) of his king. And there was the missionary, moral guide and counsellor, but not unusually a solitary voice in the desert denouncing the extravagance that characterizes the boom town.

The age was one of growth and change. Fortunes were made and unmade, families moved or were uprooted. By the middle of 1697, when it was verified that there was indeed gold in the hills, a whole socio-economic upheaval was in motion. Agricultural pursuits were shunted off in favor of the quick strike. While sugar had been mainly responsible for the settlement of the littoral, the mining industry was now opening the interior region of Minas Gerais and Mato Grosso. Early efforts at cattle breeding received added impetus with the opening of new pastures, and the need for more hands intensified the slave raids, affecting in no small way relations between the Portuguese settlers and the Spanish colonists farther west. Needless to add, the economic shift was followed by a similar transfer of centers of political power from Pernambuco and Bahia to Minas Gerais and Rio de Janeiro. More important for the future, a new sense of belonging and an incipient Brazilian conscience was born, a new feeling of identity from the mother country that will bear fruit in the independence of Brazil in the nineteenth century.

Readers for whom history is a static calendar of "dates, facts and names" will do well to study the unobtrusive method of the author. Jealously careful to understand the process of history, Professor Boxer does not stop with a catalogue of men and their doings. He analyzes their inter-relationships, their mutual causality, their meaning in terms of space and time. The result is a human picture, a live historical portrait that resurrects that bustling humanity excited by the gold that was dearer than literature, art, or music (p. 158), dearer even than life itself. It was the golden age of Brazil, an age that brought benefits to the Luso-Brazilian community on both sides of the Atlantic, and yet an age that had its share of suffering and pain.

One might single out the seventh chapter ("Rich Town of Black Gold," pp. 162-203) as typical. It describes a mining town representative of "the quintessence of that peculiar *Mineiro* civilization which flourished during the first half of the eighteenth century" (p. 162). Situated in the highlands of Minas Gerais, its gold mines played a "far from insignificant role on the eighteenth-century world stage" (p. 163). But gold implied the men and the women who handled the coveted wealth.

There was, above all, an oversupply of unmarried white men who disregarded royal laws and perpetrated atrocious crimes: "base-born and truculent rogues," an early governor called them. Human nature being what it is, miscegenation was widespread, and explanations are not lacking. There was a dearth of marriageable white girls, Negro women were believed to possess a peculiar gift for discovering new gold-bearing desopits, letting out colored slaves as prostitutes highly profited the master, young men preferred a life of dissipation, etc. It is not hard to imagine the sociological effects of this situation. Mulatto children, legitimate or otherwise, were an administrative problem, for, although the law was a dead letter and there were men of mixed blood who rose to distinction, Negro blood was a legal bar to office and preferment. Only in the nineteenth century was the stigma of mixed descent removed.

Then there was the slave population. Escape was frequent, and this, Boxer implies, was an indictment of the Brazilian slave owner: "The belief that the Brazilian was an exceptionally kind master is applicable only to the nineteenth-century salvery . . ." (p. 173). On the other hand, the slave in Minas Gerais could always hope to purchase his own freedom. Normally assigned to search for placer gold, it was easy for the slave to seek gold for himself after working a fixed number of hours for his master.

Despite the presence of gold and diamonds, prices were high in Minas Gerais. This was due, among other things, to the web of tolls, imposts and taxes which were heavy on necessities, but lighter on luxuries. There were the royal tithes (*dizimos reais*), imposed on agricultural and industrial products. There was the royal fifth (*quinto*), a levy on the production and circulation of gold. There was also the voluntary contribution (*donativo*) for extraordinary expenses. Vexatious as these were, they were doubly onerous because of the system of farming out the taxes to collectors in return for the surplus after the needs of local administration had been filled. This led to abuse. Subterfuges were resorted to and conflicts were inevitable. But, in the crisp words of the author, "If gold smugglers were chastised with whips, diamond smugglers were chastised with scorpions" (p. 203).

It is this groping for a mode of life that is the substance of the present book. Brazil, bigger and potentially more powerful than

Portugal, had to go through a learning process and know how to cope with the explosive situation of an untamed colony richer than the mother country, and a racial cauldron in which all shades of cultural and ethnic differences had to be fused into one integrated society.

Professor Boxer understood the situation so well, and he has provided the reader with a well written analysis that is a model of judicious historiography.

JOSÉ S. ARCILLA

GOD'S WORD: REVELATION AND PREACHING

REVELATION. By Werner Bulst. New York: Sheed and Ward, 1965. 158 pp.

THE PREACHING WORD. By Otto Semmelroth. New York: Herder and Herder, 1965. 256 pp.

Revelation is the english translation of a German book which appeared in 1960. It contains an introductory and useful, though somewhat superficial survey of the results of biblical scholarship concerning the idea of revelation up to the time that it was written. Perhaps today it is dated as a result of more recent work in the field. The discussion would have profited from a more penetrating analysis of the similarities and dissimilarities of revelation by word and work, such as can be found in the work of Semmelroth. The first chapter illustrating the contrast between biblical and dogmatic theologians concerning the concept of revelation is also dated at the present time. Today there is little difference between them, although one could make a case to the contrary by quoting definitions in outmoded textbooks. The author's attempt at a synthesis of the biblical and theological concepts of revelation manifests progress in the realization that the mystery of revelation cannot be adequately squeezed into an abstract definition, but is manifested best by a descriptive paraphrase which manifests the richness of its varied forms in their relation to one another. Despite its shortcomings, this volume is an advance over most treatments of revelation available in English, and will therefore be found helpful by the student of theology.

Semmelroth's book is a valuable contribution to the theology of the Word of God. Not limited to a discussion of the word in preaching as the english title misleadingly suggests, it covers all the dimensions of the Word of God. The first half of the book, which